



## Open Dumping

### What is open dumping?

- Discarding trash or unwanted items anywhere except state permitted landfills, transfer stations or recycling centers is considered open dumping. It is illegal.
- Typically, open dumps are located in secluded locations, such as woods or small ravines. However, nothing stops those who open dump from using the side of the road. Streams can also be open dump sites.
- Examples of waste which is often dumped are household building debris, construction and demolition waste, household garbage, appliances, furniture, tires, plastic, cardboard and hazardous waste.

### Why is open dumping bad?

- Open dumping contaminates the environment and destroys Indiana's beautiful scenery.
- Household Hazardous Waste (HHW), such as paint, pesticides and other toxic chemicals, can be found in open dumps.
  - No measures are made to prevent rainfall from carrying the chemicals and HHW into the water table and the local drinking water.
  - In regulated landfills, plastic liners protect the water table.
- Household garbage, which may include food scraps and dirty diapers, attracts vermin. Discarded tires collect water and form the perfect breeding area for mosquitoes.

### What is the best alternative to open dumping?

- Just like with regular landfills, the majority of refuse in open dumps can be recycled, composted or reused.
- People can buy in bulk to reduce packaging waste.
- Glass, aluminum and plastic containers, newspaper and corrugated cardboard can be taken to the nearest recycling center.
- Materials good for composting include uncontaminated and untreated natural growth solid wastes, such as tree limbs, stumps, leaves, grass clippings and sawdust that is derived from processing untreated, natural wood.
- Non-meat kitchen scraps can easily be added to the compost pile or vermicultured (composting using red worms).
- Furniture and appliances can be recycled. Various services recycle the parts or refurbish them for resale. Some Solid Waste Management Districts include a list of local services on their Web sites.
- Unusable tires should be given to an authorized tire disposal agent. Your local tire retailer will know of a tire disposal service which can take used tires. A minimal fee will be charged to ensure that the tires will be recycled properly and not placed into a hazardous tire dump.

### What are the consequences of open dumping?

- Open dumping is a class D felony and, upon conviction, can carry a fine from \$2,500 to \$25,000 and potential jail time or community service. This does not include fines or penalties that local health departments, solid waste management districts and local prosecutors may impose.
- The environmental damage to the soil and water can be both significant and irreversible.
- Piles of waste take away from Indiana's naturally beautiful landscape. Open dumping can also lower property values of surrounding homes.

### Where can I get more information?

- You can find more information about open dumping and other land-use issues at <http://www.in.gov/idem/land/>.
- To find the local Solid Waste Management District, visit <http://www.state.in.us/idem/oppta/recycling/swmd/contact.pdf>.
- To find the closest waste tire transporter, visit <http://www.in.gov/idem/land/community/lists.html#permitted>.
- To report an open dump or if someone you know is involved in illegal dumping, contact the Indiana Department of Environmental Management by phone at (800) 451-6027 or (317) 308-3040 or write to 100 North Senate Avenue, Indianapolis, IN 46206-6015.